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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 002847

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2003

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEALS
Government gives secularism guarantee-Sabah
4 Important decisions from the NSC-Hurriyet
Regime Warning-Milliyet
NSC eases the Tension-Turkiye
Rumsfeld in Baghdad-Milliyet
Grossman Warns Kurds: Be careful in your approach-Hurriyet
18-item Package from Greek Cypriots to Turkish Cypriots-Sabah
Greek Cypriots open the Package-Milliyet
Spring in the island-Turkiye

OPINION MAKERS

No Crisis at the NSC meeting-Zaman
NSC draws attention to Secularism-Yeni Safak
NSC: Secularism is the main issue-Radikal
NSC warns AKP: Secularism should be defended-Cumhuriyet
Barzani takes a step back-Cumhuriyet
Britain does not want Turkey in the Peacekeeping Force-Radikal
Grossman: Turkey did not mislead us in the North-Zaman
Positive Step from the Greek Cypriots-Yeni Safak
Dialog becomes stronger in Cyprus-Zaman

BRIEFING

Earthquake: An earthquake measuring 6.4 on the Richter scale shook southeastern Bingol province at 3:27 this morning. The epicenter of the quake is near the city center of Bingol. The death toll is already over 100, and the number is likely to increase. Many buildings collapsed in the city, and more than 400 people have been injured.

NSC: "Zaman" reports that yesterday's NSC meeting did not turn into a conflict, as was feared by many. During the 7.5 hour meeting, the military drew attention to the need to protect secularism instead of issuing warnings about fundamentalism. A declaration released at the end of the meeting said that `the importance of secularism, one of the basic characteristics of the republic, and the need for protecting secularism carefully was stressed'. The three other issues in the declaration were developments in Iraq and Cyprus, and Turkey's energy pipelines.

Iraq: "Hurriyet" reports that US Assistant Secretary Marc Grossman warned the Kurds to be careful in their approach to Turkey, and also about their policy toward PKK-KADEK militants. "Zaman" quotes Grossman as saying that `During his Washington visit PM Erdogan made no promises for a US troop deployment. No Turkish leader could make any promises at that time because that decision required the Parliament's approval'. "Radikal" reports that Britain has begun the work of establishing a peacekeeping force in Iraq. Turkey, however, has not been asked to participate in this force. Ankara is disturbed by this decision and has already informed the British Embassy in Ankara of Turkey's disappointment.

Cyprus: "Turkiye" gives extensive front-page coverage to the rapprochement on the island. People of both sides continue to take advantage of free passage. They have proved that the dispute between the governments is not a problem for the people, according to "Turkiye." "Sabah" reports that the Turkish Cypriot decision on free passage forced the Greek side to make some concessions too, and the Greeks announced a new set of measures yesterday. The package offers employment possibilities to the Turks, and gives them the right to vote in Greek Cypriot elections and to run for seats in the Cypriot Parliament.

EDITORIAL OPINION:

- a) Iraqi rebuilding
- b) Turkish foreign policy

"Rebuilding Iraq"
Soli Ozel wrote in mass appeal Sabah (45/1): "The Bush administration continues to take radical steps in both foreign and domestic policy. The post-September 11 psychology has to a certain extent deprived the American people of some basic rights and freedoms. Internationally speaking, the US is pursuing a policy of 'preemptive strikes', which calls for the continuation of American military strength. . It will be interesting to see whether the current US policy will work in the rebuilding of Iraq. The rebuilding efforts will eventually have an impact on the Middle East process as well. . Despite all of the power and authority of the United States, the Iraq case is subject to a series of benchmark tests. The first test is how to shape a new structure on the relics of the old system, and whether that can really work. Second, the US success in rebuilding Iraq depends not only on the US, but also the decisions to be taken by the 'other actors' in Iraq. The US will eventually have to cooperate with its allies as well as regional actors as part of this process."

"A warning for the Turkish foreign policy"
Yilmaz Oztuna warned in conservative-mass appeal Turkiye (5/1): "Turkey, whether intentional or not, is making a mistake by its current contacts with Iran and Syria. Let's not forget that the US is Turkey's ally, whereas both Iran and Syria are not. Moreover, the US listed both of them as terrorist states, and both of them will eventually face an American intervention. . Reading history will tell us enough about how 'one-sided love affairs' between states end up disastrously. Unfortunately, religiously-based movements always ignore this fact."

PEARSON